

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
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October 8, 2003

EMS  
Instruction Memorandum No. ID-2004-003  
Expires: 09/30/2005

To: ICT/IMF  
Attn: Safety Personnel

From: State Director

Subject: All Terrain Vehicle Loading and Transport Procedures for Pick-up Trucks

**Program Area:** Safety and Health Program Management

**Purpose:** This Instruction Memorandum (IM) is being published to forward WO IM No. 2003-265, All Terrain Vehicle Loading and Transport Procedures for Pick-ups, dated September 3, 2003.

**Policy/Action:** This WO IM is to establish Standard Operating Procedures to ensure safe loading, unloading, and transport of ATV's in pick-up trucks.

**Timeframe:** This policy is effective immediately.

**Background:** Idaho Bureau of Land Management has ATV Training, Certification, and Operation Policy found in IM No. ID-2003-002. Further information for safe loading, unloading and transport of ATV's in pick-up trucks can be found in WO IM-2003-265.

**Manual/Handbook Sections Affected:** This IM serves as interim guidance to Idaho Manual Supplement – Safety 1112 – until it is issued.

**Coordination:** This IM has been coordinated with the State Safety and Occupational Health Manager and Human Resources Officer.

**Contact:** Please address any questions or concerns regarding this IM to Jan Peterson, State Safety and Occupational Health Manager at (208) 373-4030.

**Lower Snake River District with Union:** Implementation of this directive is on-hold pending negotiations with the Union.

Signed  
K Lynn Bennett

Authenticated  
Sylvia Graves  
Administrative Assistant

Attachment

1 – WO IM No. 2003-265, All Terrain Vehicle Loading and Transport Procedures for Pick-ups  
(4 pp)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

September 3, 2003

EMS TRANSMISSION 09/05/2003  
Instruction Memorandum No. 2003-265  
Expires: 09/30/2004

To: State and Center Directors

Attention: Safety Managers

From: Assistant Director, Human Resources Management

Subject: All Terrain Vehicle Loading and Transport Procedures for Pick-ups

The objective of this IM is to establish Standard Operating Procedures to ensure safe loading, unloading, and transport of ATVs in pickup trucks. Only qualified operators are permitted to load or unload ATVs. Great care must be taken to avoid a wide variety of hazards associated with this operation. A Risk Assessment will be done prior to ATV operation, as circumstances are rarely constant. Loading/unloading operations should *never* become routine.

The preferred method of transporting ATVs is via trailer. Trailers normally have built-in ramps and set lower to the ground, decreasing the loading angle. If operational reasons make it necessary to transport an ATV via pick-up, it is strongly recommended that a winch be mounted either on the ATV or the pick-up and that the winch be used for all loading/unloading operations.

If the ATV must be ridden into a truck bed, the following procedures will govern BLM personnel:

**Personal Protective Equipment:**

1. All required Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) (as determined by the Risk Assessment or JHA, and manufacturers recommendations) must be worn while loading and unloading ATVs to/from vehicles. This includes but is not limited to, an approved motor vehicle helmet, leather boots, appropriate gloves, and eye protection.

**Loading Ramps:**

1. Loading ramps may be plastic, aluminum or steel. If aluminum or steel they must be of

welded construction. Plastic ramps may be used if commercially designed and manufactured for ATV loading. Ramps may be one or two piece, rigid or folding. Hinges must be factory installed. Ramp surface (driving surface) should have closely spaced cross members or mesh construction with high traction surface. Plastic ramps must have traction blocks molded into drive surface. Under no circumstances will wooden ramps be used.

2. Ramps must have a minimum rated capacity of 1000 pounds. For ATV's 500 cc and larger, or if the ATV has any type of external spray tank or other bolt-on accessories, ramps must have a minimum rated capacity of 1500 pounds.
3. One piece, bi- or tri-fold ramps must be a minimum of 46 inches wide when extended for loading. One piece ramps must be wider than the distance between the ATV's tires as measured from the outside of the left tire to the outside of the right tire. For two-piece ramps, each ramp must be a minimum of 10 inches wide. Ramp length must be a minimum of 84 inches (7 feet) long when extended for loading.
4. All ramps must have chains or straps to secure the ramps to the vehicle tailgate. Use of ramp chains or straps during loading is mandatory. These chains or straps prevent rearward movement of the ramps during loading.

#### **Vehicle:**

1. Only pickup trucks or larger vehicles that have room for all four wheels of the ATV to rest on the bed of the truck will be used to transport ATVs. Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR), suspension weight capacity and tire load ratings may not be exceeded.
2. Pickup trucks may transport only one ATV loaded in the bed and all four ATV wheels/tires must be in contact with the bed surface.
3. Transport vehicles should be equipped with front-end header boards (headache racks) if possible.
4. All vehicles must have a flat bed surface, wide enough between wheel wells that the ATV may be rolled on the bed without riding over the wheel wells. Under no circumstances will an ATV be loaded into a vehicle when the ATV must be driven over the wheel wells.
5. Tie downs sufficient to secure the ATV to the vehicle must be available. Eyebolts installed in the vehicle must be capable of holding 1000 pounds. Stake pocket tie downs, available at many auto or trailer retail stores, are an alternative to eyebolts. Stake pocket tie downs must have a 1000-pound capacity.

#### **Vehicle/Ramp Position:**

1. The ramp angle from vehicle to ground has the largest influence on risk when

loading/unloading ATV's. If the ramp angle is reduced, and all other conditions remain the same, risk is reduced. The truck should be positioned to take advantage of any terrain features that will help reduce the ramp angle. Therefore, the operator should consider the following methods to reduce the ramp angle.

2. The use of a loading wall, if available, or positioning the rear of the truck near a berm will reduce the ramp angle from truck bed to ground. If the loading wall is the correct height, it may eliminate the need for ramps and allow roll-on/roll-off loading.
3. The truck may be positioned with the rear wheels in a depression (for example, a ditch) to reduce the ramp angle. This lowers the bed of the truck and allows the ramps to be located on higher ground on the far side of the depression.
4. Loading ramps must be secured to the truck bed with chains or straps designed for that purpose. When in position for loading, the chains or straps must be taut with no slack or sag.
5. Two-piece loading ramps must be positioned parallel and spaced so the ATV tires are centered on the ramps. One-piece ramps must be centered on the truck bed and the ATV driven up the center of the ramp.
6. Loading ramps should be positioned so the ends in contact with the ground are level or at the same height. Uneven ramps may cause the ATV to tip over sideways during loading/unloading.

### **Loading Technique:**

1. The ATV's racks should be unloaded before transporting. Any heavy cargo must be removed and/or spray tanks emptied. If heavy cargo or tanks cannot be removed, sandbags or other heavy objects should be secured to the opposite cargo rack to help balance the ATV. The only safe method of loading an ATV that has a loaded spray tank or other heavy load on the back is to winch the ATV into the bed of the pick-up.
2. Padding should be placed at the front of the vehicle's bed to protect both vehicles and help absorb impact during loading. An old tire (minus the rim) works well for this.
3. When preparing to drive the ATV into the bed of a vehicle, the operator should be seated, with feet positioned on the ATV's footrests, and leaning forward. This keeps the operator's weight low over the ATV's center of gravity.
4. The ATV should be loaded with the front of the ATV toward the front of the vehicle. In cases where the ATV must be loaded with a tank or other load on the ATV rear, it may be safer to load the ATV with the rear facing the truck bed, placing the center of gravity further forward and reducing the probability of the ATV tipping backward off the ramp.
5. The operator should apply throttle smoothly and climb the ramp at low speed. Too much

or sudden increases in throttle will cause the ATV to be harder to control and may cause the ATV to impact the front of the vehicle bed or over-turn.

6. As the ATV starts up the ramp the operator should lean toward the uphill direction, i.e. toward the ramps, to help keep the ATV balanced.
7. The safest method of unloading is to push the ATV down the ramps, carefully braking to ensure control of the ATV. When riding down, the operator should apply only enough throttle to start the ATV down the ramps, then allow the ATV to roll backwards using light pressure on all the brakes to control speed.
8. For transport, ATV's with manual transmissions should be left in first gear. ATV's with automatic transmissions should be in the Park position. The ATV's ignition key should be turned off and removed, the parking brake set, the run/stop switch in the stop (or off) position and the fuel lever turned to the off position.

### **Secure Load:**

1. Blocking devices must be installed in the front, back, and on both sides of the wheels to keep it from rolling. This block is strictly an additional safety precaution and in no way obviates the need for strapping the ATV in securely.
1. One-inch wide nylon straps, with metal hooks on the ends and ratchet buckles, with a rated capacity of 1500 pounds, must be used to secure the ATV to the vehicle. The metal hooks must either have a deep enough throat to ensure that the strap cannot come loose or have a safety latch. These tie down straps are available at most automotive or department stores and from local ATV dealers. Cam action, non-ratcheting buckles are not permitted. Rope tie downs are not permitted.
2. A minimum of three tie downs will be used to secure the ATV to the vehicle. One tie down must be used to secure the front of the ATV to the vehicle. Two tie downs must be used to secure the rear of the ATV to the vehicle. Four tie downs are preferred and are required if vehicle tailgate will not close with ATV in bed.
3. Hooks on one end of the tie-downs must be attached to the ATV's frame tubing, not the racks. Hooks on the other end must be attached to vehicle cargo anchors. If using one tie-down to secure ATV's front, pass the strap around tubing on the front bumper and secure hooks on both ends to vehicle cargo anchors.

If you have any questions, please contact Bruce Prater at (202) 501-2664, or e-mail me at [bruce\\_prater@blm.gov](mailto:bruce_prater@blm.gov).

Signed by:  
Marilyn H. Johnson  
Assistant Director  
Human Resources Management

Authenticated by:  
Barbara J. Brown  
Policy & Records Group, WO-560